

From: donovan2@ix.netcom.com@inetgw
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/12/01 9:02pm
Subject: Complaints about Microsoft

Dear Sir or Madam:

Hopefully this complaint is not too late. Approximately 2 1/2 years ago, when I bought a computer from Gateway, I asked to have Word Perfect Office and not Microsoft's office installed. That was no problem, but within 6 months of the first purchase, when we went to purchase another computer, Gateway indicated Microsoft no longer let them substitute Word Perfect, so we were forced to buy Word Perfect separately, while MS Office was included in price. It is discouraging that Microsoft's bundling practice has virtually eliminated all competing office suites, though its product is not superior. Law firms throughout the country were forced to change systems to Microsoft word, though it was not as well suited to the practice. This was because business users had switched because the products were bundled or tied to the Windows operating system. MS clearly has monopoly power and these practices should have been illegal. As a result of these illegal actions we can expect few if any improvements to be developed by competitors as they no longer have any market share. For my purposes the Word Perfect/Corel products were clearly superior to microsoft, but it isn't clear they will be able to remain in business.

Fortunately by not using microsoft, our office has avoided virtually all virus attacks. Just like it is dangerous to eliminate all varieties of a plant, because the entire species could be wiped out by an insect, fungus, etc to which that plant is not immune, so the vulnerability of our computer systems to viruses is a result of the nearly complete elimination of competing operating systems and software, particularly e-mail and internet services.

MS Internet Explorer should be unbundled and be sold separately. At home on Windows 95 I was able to uninstall explorer, but until I did, it was clearly programmed to cause my computer to crash when I used Netscape. At work when I uninstalled explorer, my whole hard disc crashed and everything had to be reinstalled. Microsoft has not built a great product and compared to what others have created, but have been unable to market, perhaps not even good. It is outrageous that a settlement would include giving microsoft computers to anyone as that is a great advertisement and only increases their market share. I would hope the court would not approve a settlement, that did not require Microsoft to sell explorer separately--in fact that should be a different company--but if not they should not be allowed to sell it below cost, and never to give it away with Windows. They should be required to give cash to schools to purchase a computer system and networks of their choice.

For 3 years I ran a Novell network for a law firm, having 50 computer users. In that time, we never crashed once (it was DOS based and so more stable than windows). We could work from home, and access information through a modem at that time. It was very discouraging to see how often windows based system crashed for other administrators. We did have Windows and could use it if necessary, but rarely was there any need, which probably is one reason we were never down. Unfortunately Windows NT will probably drive Novell out of business also, though NT is an inferior product.

Again, I hope it isn't too late to lodge these complaints.
Thanks for the opportunity. Patricia Gray